

U. S. ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION  
BULLETIN GM-SEC-5  
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DOCUMENT SECURITY  
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17. DESTRUCTION OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS

a. Destruction of Top Secret Documents

- (1) By Whom. Normally a Top Secret document shall be destroyed by the authenticating official whose symbol appears thereon, or his successor, or by higher authority.

CAUTION: A record copy of a Top Secret document shall be retained by the authenticating official. Only if downgraded may consideration be given to the destruction of the record copy in accordance with approved records disposition practices.

- (2) Alternative Procedure. If desired, a custodian may destroy a Top Secret document in his possession, after obtaining authority in writing from the authenticating official whose symbol appears on the document, his successor, or higher authority.

NOTE: If a Top Secret document bears the notation thereon, "Destroy Copy Within \_\_\_\_ Days." destruction at the time indicated is mandatory unless an extension of time is secured in writing from the authenticating official, his alternate, successor or higher authority. No further consent prior to destruction is required to be obtained from the authenticating official, or his successor or from higher authority.

- (3) Method of Destruction: Top Secret documents shall be shredded and completely burned and the residue pulverized by the custodian (or his designated representative) in the presence of a representative approved by the responsible AEC security office. As an alternative Top Secret documents may be destroyed by macerating or pulping by the custodian (or his designated representative) in the presence of a representative approved by the responsible AEC security office.

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- (4) Certificate of Destruction: A certificate of destruction for Top Secret documents to be destroyed, in the form appended hereto, shall be prepared in triplicate, setting forth the following information:

- (a) Identification number of the documents, and
- (b) Number of pages of which the Top Secret document destroyed consists.

If the Top Secret documents to be destroyed are not numbered, the certificate of destruction shall set forth:

- (a) A brief description (subject or title) of each Top Secret document destroyed,
- (b) Date of the documents, and
- (c) Number of pages of which the document consists. The certificate of destruction shall be signed by the person destroying the document and the person witnessing the destruction.

Disposition of copies of the certificate of destruction shall be made as follows:

- (a) One copy of the certificate shall be retained in the Office of the custodian at the time of destruction.
- (b) The second copy of the certificate shall be forwarded to the Central Document Control Office, Division of Security, N. W., Washington, D. C.
- (c) The third copy of the certificate shall be forwarded to the authenticating official whose symbol appears on the document, if other than the custodian at the time of destruction.

Verification that the Top Secret document is intact, and that the number of pages included in the documentation is actually destroyed, shall be made during the course of the destruction thereof. The certificate of destruction shall be signed only after such verification.

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b. Destruction of Documents Classified Secret or Confidential

- (1) Method of Destruction. Documents classified Secret or Confidential shall be destroyed by shredding and burning or by macerating or pulping, by properly authorized individuals. If no such system of destruction by properly authorized individuals has been established by the General Manager or responsible Manager of Operations involved, destruction of Secret or Confidential documents shall be made by the custodian in the presence of a disinterested witness.
- (2) Record of Destruction. A record of destruction shall be maintained in the office of the last custodian of all Secret documents and Confidential documents which are documented. The record shall contain the following information: subject or title and classification of the document, date of document, report number, series and copy number, date of destruction and the name of the person who destroyed the document.

c. Disposal of Waste

- (1) Work sheets, carbon paper, stenographer's notes, imperfect copies, stencils, cylinders which cannot be shaved, or other sound recordings, which are classified, or warrant a classification, should be safeguarded in the manner prescribed for documents of the same classification until destroyed. They shall be destroyed in the manner prescribed for documents of the classification which they bear or warrant.
- (2) Record of destruction is not required to be maintained in these cases, with the exception that a certificate of destruction is required for any such material classified Top Secret which has been authenticated.

d. Cylinders and Disks. Cylinders which have classified information recorded thereon may be shaved and this will be considered the equivalent of destruction.

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Disks containing classified information shall be either broken or torn, depending on the composition thereof, and burned.

- e. Receipt for Top Secret Documents. The original (white) and quadruplicate (yellow) copies of Receipt for Top Secret documents, Form AEC-247, may be destroyed after a period of one year from date of dispatch which appears thereon.
- f. Classified Material Receipt. Copies of Classified Material Receipt, Form AEC-126, or any receipt similar in content, may be destroyed at any time after the lapse of five years from the date appearing on such receipt, on which the documents listed thereon were transmitted.

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